



Thomas Edwin Fennessy

July 4, 1936 - October 31, 2025

Thomas Edwin Fennessy, 89, passed away on Oct. 31, 2025 at his home in Summerfield, Florida, after a short but fierce battle with cancer. In his final weeks, Tom was visited by a long line of friends and relations, who came to share a beer and say goodbye to a man who faced his diagnosis the way he approached his life — with strength, equanimity, and faith. "I'm ready," he'd say. He was especially ready to be reunited with Mary-Jo, his wife and the mother of their children, each of whom did their best to ease his passage into the next life. Mary-Jo left us in 2019, and while he soldiered on after her passing, he missed her like crazy — and so we're quite certain they're dancing at this very moment. (Assuming he's finished his round of golf.)

Tom was born on July 4, 1936, the ninth of 11 children of Henry and Clara Fennessy of Auburn, New York. Tom graduated from West High School in 1954 and served four years in the U.S. Army before marrying Mary-Jo Gleason in 1962 at St. Alphonsus Church. They eventually settled in her childhood home on North Seward Avenue, and there they raised six children. Tom supported his family as a union carpenter with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, where he worked for many years for William E. Bouley Company and Iversen Construction. Tom built schools, dams, bridges, churches, apartment buildings, office towers, you name it. He could build anything and outwork anyone, and he did. If a job was worth doing, it was worth doing right the first time, and he instilled this philosophy in each of his children.

Tom loved to hunt and fish, and he was rarely happier than when he was on or near Owasco Lake. But he hated the cold — a resentment born of decades laboring outside in upstate New York winters. Since he also hated being stuck indoors, he resolved this dilemma by buying a second home in Florida for him and Mary-Jo to enjoy after they retired. There he spent the winter months golfing with his great friend Jimmy Hoey, sitting outside in the sun in January, and shaking his head in befuddled amazement at all the poor suckers back in Auburn shoveling snow. In later years when he could no longer play golf regularly, he took up cornhole, approaching it with the same tenacity and focus with which he tackled everything.

Tom's spirit lives on through his six children, Karen (John) Rabish, Joseph (Mary Lee), Thomas (Thy), Stephen (Christy), Christine (Keith Plunkett), and John (Vita); seven grandchildren; two great-grandsons; and two siblings, Bruce and Jean. He was predeceased by Mary-Jo in 2019, and by his siblings Rita, Robert, Arlene, Gloria, Richard, Donald, Helen, and Marilyn.

A Mass of remembrance will be celebrated in memory of both Tom and Mary-Jo at St. Alphonsus Church at a date to be determined. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Tom and Mary-Jo's names to Hospice of Marion County. <https://hospiceofmarion.org/donate/>

Tribute Wall

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“ *One of the most hard working , determined person I loved!! He always made me smile, laugh and welcomed me as part of the family! Mr. Thomas Fennessy RIP. You will be remembered. God Bless the Fennessy family.*

Chuck Ehresman - November 03, 2025 at 09:50 AM